

References

Don't choose close relatives like your mom or dad for references—unless you have been working for them.

An employer may ask you for a list of references when you apply for a job. Often this is done during or after the interview process or on the application. Your list of references does not need to be a part of your resume unless you think it will help you get the job. For example, if one of your references is an important or influential person in your field, you may decide to include that in your resume. You don't need to write "References available upon request" on your resume. It is assumed that if the employer needs your references, he or she will ask for them.

Your references should be listed on a separate sheet of paper. It should include the person's name, title, address, and telephone number. Make sure this information is accurate. You don't want the employer calling a wrong telephone number.

Who are good references? There are two types: professional and personal. Professional references include supervisors, colleagues, clients, people you have supervised, and professors or teachers. It is important to select people who will be able to demonstrate your skills, knowledge, abilities and performance to the employer. Choose four or five people. Sometimes employers ask for personal references. These are people who can attest to your good character. You should not choose people you have known less than one year, boyfriends or girlfriends, your spouse, or close relatives like your mom or dad—unless you have been working for them.

Make sure you get permission to put people on your references list and let your references know when you are applying for jobs and what the jobs are. First, this is the polite thing to do, but it is also important for your references to prepare for the call from the employer so they can site specific examples of your good work. You don't want an employer giving a surprise call to a past colleague who can't remember you. Only include people you are sure will say good things about you.

Finally, don't forget to thank the people who agree to be your references. ©

